

Discover Presidential Log Cabins

A Teacher's Discussion Guide

"Discover Presidential Log Cabins" is a set of materials designed to help educate 6th to 8th grade students about the significance of three log cabin sites occupied by four of our nation's greatest leaders. Through these materials, students will discover the rich history associated with these log structures and learn why it is important to preserve them. This teacher's discussion guide is intended for use as part of a larger, comprehensive social studies program, and may be adapted to complement your lesson plans.

The hallowed grounds of these cabin sites have been protected as units of the National Park System. At these sites, four men formed philosophies that would guide their presidencies in the years that followed. Preserving their log cabin sites saves important aspects of our shared history as a nation.

The **"Discover Presidential Log Cabins"** program focuses on three park sites:

- 18th century — **The Continental Army Encampment at Valley Forge, PA**, where during the harsh winter of 1777, General George Washington built a unified professional military organization that ultimately triumphed over the British. The most comprehensive **archeological dig** ever undertaken at Valley Forge will begin in March to determine where a brigade of log huts stood during General Washington's encampment over 200 years ago.
- 19th century — **Grant's Headquarters at City Point, Petersburg National Battlefield, Hopewell, VA**, where General Ulysses S. Grant drew up the final battle plans for the Civil War, and with President Abraham Lincoln, laid plans for the terms of surrender and the reconstruction of the South. This is also the site where President Lincoln had an eerie premonition of his own death — two weeks before his assassination.
- Late 19th century — **The Maltese Cross Cabin, near Medora, ND**, was home and inspiration to Theodore Roosevelt prior to his presidency. Roosevelt came to the West as a sickly and foppish Easterner. While in the Little Missouri Badlands, he became a real cowboy and rancher. He strengthened his mind and body, and learned how to lead poorer and rougher men. TR's first-hand learning experiences during his time in the badlands helped mold his ideals and later influenced his actions while President and conservation activist.

Spanning time from the birth of our nation to the conservation of its lands, the experiences of Washington, Grant, Lincoln, and Roosevelt while at these three cabin sites represent a unique periods in our nation's history. Use these educational tools to assist in teaching the significance of these sites and the great leaders who dwelled within them.

Target Audience

This program is designed for students in 6th to 8th grades. Many of the materials can, however, be adapted for use in other grade levels.

Program Components

(Available to teachers free of charge, courtesy of Aurora Foods, makers of Log Cabin Syrup)

Teacher's Discussion Guide

Classroom Activity Sheets

Web Site

Educational Videotape

Live Electronic Field Trips

Poster

Using the Program Components**Teacher's Discussion Guide and Classroom Activity Sheets**

The materials in this guide can supplement your existing lesson plans on the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, the U.S. Presidents, conservation, and the National Parks. The classroom activity sheets offer suggestions on how to interactively incorporate this information in ways that make learning exciting for your students.

Complementing this guide is a new Web site (located at:

www.nps.gov/LogCabin), an educational videotape, and a series of electronic field trips — all devoted to Discovering American's Presidential Log Cabins.

Combining these different educational tools, we offer you an innovative package with which to teach your students about significant periods in American history.

Used alone or in combination, you will find these materials valuable resources from school year to school year.

Classroom Activity Sheets

Included in this guide are five activity sheets for classroom use so your students can apply the information they have learned about the Log Cabin Presidents.

Topics include:

- "Excavation Adventure" — students become junior archeologists as they interpret Commander Washington's orders to construct a log hut city at Valley Forge.
- "Letters Home" — students become Civil War soldiers and create their own letters home from the battlefield.
- "Conservation President" — students learn more about Theodore Roosevelt's role in conservation and write a fact sheet on one of the National Parks in their state.
- "Great Leaders" — students select one of the featured Presidents, research their life, and write a paper on what made him a great leader.

- "Yesteryear Newspaper" — students work as a group and produce one page of a newspaper from a period featured in this program. The team will research, write, design, and present to the class their yesteryear newspaper.

Additional interactive activities are available on the Web site (www.nps.gov/LogCabin) that will challenge students to apply what they are learning. These activities include:

- Virtual Log Cabins — students can build their own version of the Grant and Roosevelt log cabins in the "Students" section of the Web site.
- "Dig It" — students can play an interactive question and answer card game that provides further information on the archeological dig being conducted at Valley Forge in 2000.

Web Site

A new, interactive Web site at www.nps.gov/LogCabin is a resource you will surely want to bookmark and visit with your students time and time again! This educational site presents historical information in a fun, interactive way that will appeal to your 6th to 8th grade students. The site is divided into areas specific to teachers and students, and includes answers to the following queries:

1. What was it like for 12 soldiers to share a rustic log hut at Valley Forge?
2. What were the important outcomes of Lincoln's meetings with Grant at City Point?
3. What first attracted Theodore Roosevelt to the Dakota Territory and why did he later return to become a cowboy?

The site will be continuously updated and enhanced. Your students can learn what it takes to accurately restore the Grant and Roosevelt cabins. And, students can even become archeological "assistants" when they log on to the Valley Forge section and join in on the big dig. A listing of pertinent resources and Web site links is provided as well. The discovery quest continues throughout the summer, as students, parents, and teachers visit the Web site to learn more. Families can even plan summer vacations to the park sites at Valley Forge, PA, Hopewell, VA or Medora, ND.

Educational Videotape: "Discover Presidential Log Cabins"

Also included in the program is a comprehensive summary of the three Presidential Log Cabin sites. The eight-minute videotape opens with highlights of the park sites, including Washington's Continental Army Encampment at Valley Forge, Grant's Headquarters at City Point, and Roosevelt's Maltese Cross Cabin. Segments will detail each of the restoration sites, the archeological dig, the four presidents, and the historical significance of events that occurred there.

The video presentation can serve as an ideal preparation module for the electronic field trips that follow. You may choose to show your class this

informative video before you log on to take part in the field trips where your students can quiz historians about any of the featured areas. Supplies of the video are limited to one free copy per school (with unlimited rights for schools to make additional copies of the tape). Please refer to the registration information in this guide and register early. Videos will be mailed to your school address in early September 2000.

Electronic Field Trips

Take your students on field trips to log cabin sites in Valley Forge, City Point, and Medora — all without leaving your classroom! These are not the standard field trips you may be used to, however. There's no need to schedule a full day away from school. All you need for this journey is at least one computer with Internet access and a classroom of students eager to participate in a live chat session. Your class can learn more about the contributions of Presidents Washington, Grant, Lincoln, and Roosevelt as they chat with park historians. There are two field trips scheduled to each of the three presidential park sites — one morning and one afternoon session.

Wednesday, October 18, 2000 — Valley Forge — live chat at 11:00 a.m. EDT (Eastern Daylight Time) and 2:00 p.m. EDT.

Wednesday, October 25, 2000 — Grant's Headquarters at City Point — live chat at 11:00 a.m. EDT and 2:00 p.m. EDT.

Wednesday, November 1, 2000 — Roosevelt's Maltese Cross Cabin — live chat at 11:00 a.m. EST (Eastern Standard Time) and 2:00 p.m. EST.

Register for only one specific field trip, or the entire series of three. Please refer to the registration information in this guide for further information. Each electronic field trip lasts 20 minutes. Due to capacity issues, only a limited number of pre-registered schools will be able to participate. Be sure to register early.

A colorful Classroom Poster will be sent to you for display in your classroom. It will serve as a great reminder of the Web site address and the electronic field trip dates and times.

Registration Information

There is a limited supply of free "Discover Presidential Log Cabins" educational videotapes available for 6th to 8th grade social studies and history teachers. To receive a copy, and to register for the electronic field trips (see schedule above), please call toll-free 1-800-943-6775, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., EST, fax your request to 212/921-9536, or email us at: logcabin@westglen.com. You will receive confirmation of your registration.

For more information, visit the official Web site at: www.nps.gov/LogCabin. The Presidential Log Cabin Web site features sections designed just for teachers and students, as well as a family section. Visit the site often as part of your classroom

activities and encourage your students to visit with their parents to learn more about these historic log cabins.

"Discover Presidential Log Cabins" educational materials are provided to teachers FREE and were created by the National Park Foundation, the National Park Service and Aurora Foods, Inc., makers of Log Cabin syrup. Aurora is a Proud Restoration Partner with the National Park Foundation (NPF) and the National Park Service. The program was created by NPF to fund the restoration of log buildings throughout the National Park System. Currently, more than 400 log cabins in more than 300 National Parks are in need of restoration. Aurora Foods is contributing up to \$1 million over four years to fund log cabin restorations and educational activities in the National Parks.